

PTA ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
October 11, 2023
Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

Michael Wasko
Vanessa Wolsky
Aaron Wasserman
Michael Anderson
George Dakak
Linda Fritschy-Oakes
Lisa Bomengo
Christina Cronkite
Jaclyn Layman
Maria Carrell
Carmen Camean
Roberto Camean
Greg Margolis
Darrin Stark

ITEMS DISCUSSED:

- 1) Welcome/Introductions
 - a. Welcome message from Mr. Wasko, Superintendent of Schools
 - b. Mr. Wasko shared a handout with meeting dates for 2023-2024 school year

- 2) 2023-2024 Board of Education Goals and District Goals
 - a. Mr. Wasko reviewed District Goals and Board Goals for 2023-2024 school year

- 3) Opening of School
 - a. Mr. Wasko highlighted key information as it pertains to the opening of schools for the 2023-2024 school year.
 - i. Positive opening w/ much done behind the scenes.
 - ii. Opening schools with 1247 students enrolled K-8.
 - iii. Mr. Wasko is working with the town to get update when they occur.
 - iv. Hired 12 new staff members (8 tenure track and 4 short-term/long-term substitutes).
 - v. Staffing has been difficult due to staffing shortages across the state/country. We are doing our best and being creative to fill our positions.

- 4) Preparation for the 2024-2025 School Year
 - a. Vanessa Wolsky provided an update on the 2024-2025 budget process, which is already underway. As part of the budget, the district applied for grant money to address some floors, a section of roof, and a generator for MJS.
- 5) Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJDOE QSAC Monitoring)
 - a. Mr. Wasko shared an update on the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC). The process will include site visits to the schools.
- 6) Recreation Updates
 - a. On behalf of Denise Brennan, Mr. Wasko provided an update from the Hanover Township Recreation Department. The district will continue to share important information/flyers in the virtual backpack and send community announcements via the SwiftK12 Notification System.
- 7) PTA/School Updates
 - a. Regional High School School District - Maria Carrell
 - i. Maria Carrell highlighted key information from the high school district. They, too, had a successful opening to the 2023-2024 school year. They are in full swing with their traditional fall events, including a 7th & 8th grade open house, a college fair including 87 post-secondary institutions, and fall plays. Maria Carrell shared that Whippany Park High School was recognized as an AP Honor Roll School for their student's success. She concluded her report by sharing that they have been busy with their referendum work. Phase 1 has been completed and Phase 2 will be starting soon.
 - b. Special Education - Greg Margolis
 - i. Mr. Margolis shared that the Special Education Advisory Group he coordinates will be starting up soon. Toward the end of last school year they had sent a survey to solicit beneficial topics for their group's meetings. This year, the first session will be focused on social skills. Greg Margolis also shared key information regarding the Behavioral Threat and Assessment (BTAM) teams. This newly required group is required by the state and must be in place at both the district and school level. The teams are in place to identify students who may be a harm to themselves or others and then put an intervention plan in place. We will continue to partner with HTPD in this process.
 - c. Salem Drive School - Roberto Camean and Jaclyn Layman
 - i. Mr. Camean highlighted the importance of social and emotional learning and took time to discuss the Week of Respect across the district. He

highlighted the various spirit days, assemblies, read aloud partnerships, chalk walks, and weekly character education lessons.

ii. Mrs. Layman shared that the SDS PTA has been working to connect all SDS families to the PTA and only has one left. She discussed the upcoming Trunk or Treat, Boo Bags, the PTA Book Fair, and a program for donations to support less fortunate community members.

d. Bee Meadow School - Darrin Stark and Lynda Fritschy-Oakes

i. Mr. Stark discussed some of the exciting events that are upcoming in the schools, including Halloween parades, the holiday concerts, and the district-wide Souper Bowl canned food drive. Mr. Stark also highlighted the Student Council and how students can get involved.

ii. Mrs. Fritschy-Oakes discussed the installation of the playground at BMS. She also highlighted events supported by the BMS PTA, including the Kindergarten orientation, the Cheer & Tear event on the first day of school, a movie night, the Trunk or Treat, the PTA Book Fair, and the Caring & Sharing/ Holiday Boutique event.

e. Mountview Road School - Carmen Camean and Christine Conkrite

i. Mrs. Camean discussed the various partnerships that the schools have with the community including with the Barclays, WPHS for Junior Achievement, L.E.A.D. with the HTPD, and dictionaries for our 3rd grade students from the Rotary Club.

ii. Mrs. Cronkrite highlighted the gaga pit that was installed at MTV. She also shared some of the events provided by the MTV PTA including a popsicle night, Food Truck Friday, Trunk or Treat, Pain & Sip Night at the Ukrainian Center, the Holiday Bazaar, and the Color Run fundraiser.

f. Memorial Junior School - Michael Anderson

i. Mr. Anderson discussed the upcoming Outdoor Education Trip, specific activities planned for the middle school for the Week of Respect, and 8th grade events that focus on the transition to high school with WPHS and Morris County Vocational School District.

ii. Mr. Anderson also highlighted information from the PTA including the ongoing need for PTA officers for upcoming school years, different fundraising activities, the PTA Book Fair, and support of 8th Grade and High School Graduation Awards.

8) District Testing Update - Darrin Stark

a. Mr. Stark discussed the upcoming District Testing Report, which will take place at the October 26th Board of Education meeting. The 6th Grade students took the InView Assessment on Friday, September 15th. Testing dates have been updated on the district website.

9) Curriculum Updates - Aaron Wasserman

- a. Mr. Wasserman provided an update on IXL. The first benchmarking window will be closing soon. The data that is collected will help the teachers guide support for students. While the benchmarking data is helpful, it is a snapshot of a moment in time. As we've traditionally done, we have focused on the development of the whole child and not put all of our focus on testing data. Aaron Wasserman also highlighted the professional development for staff, including the Professional Development Day held on Monday October 9th, math coaching, Soudy System training, and the upcoming LLI training.

10) Public Relations

- a. Mr. Wasko discussed mosquito remediation on the fields surrounding the schools. He also highlighted that any school closing information would be distributed via a SwiftK12 Notification and posted on the district website and app. Mr. Wasko and Mrs. Bomengo discussed the updated Board statement regarding recent policy updates. Mr. Wasko concluded his report by discussing the upcoming elections in November and how, now that elections have been moved, they will not impact the schools.